

PREVENT A STROKE SPOT A STROKE

*Know the Stroke Warning
Signs & Symptoms
ACT F.A.S.T.*

What is a Stroke

A stroke occurs when a blood clot blocks an artery (a blood vessel that carries blood from the heart to the body) or a blood vessel (a tube through which the blood moves through the body) breaks, interrupting blood flow to an area of the brain. When either of these things happen, brain cells begin to die and brain damage occurs.

When brain cells die during a stroke, abilities controlled by that area of the brain are lost. These abilities can include speech, movement and memory. How a stroke patient is affected depends on where the stroke occurs in the brain and how much the brain is damaged

Stroke Facts

- A stroke is a brain attack, cutting off vital blood flow and oxygen to the brain
- In the United States, Stroke is the 5th cause of death and leading cause of serious long-term disability
- Approximately 795,000 Americans each year suffer a new or recurrent stroke
- Every 40 seconds someone has a Stroke
- On an average every four minutes, someone dies from a stroke
- Kills ~128,000 people a year
- Two million brain cells die every minute during a stroke, increasing the risk of permanent brain damage, disability or death. Recognizing symptoms and acting F.A.S.T. to get medical attention can save a life and limit disabilities
- Approximately 15% of all Strokes occur after a TIA (Transient Ischemic Attack)
- TIA is a medical emergency!

Stroke Prevention

Routine evaluation by your Primary Care Physician and following Life's Simple 7 is key to Stroke Prevention

1. **Manage your blood pressure** – Get your blood pressure checked regularly by your primary care physician.
2. **Eat Healthier** – Eat foods low in saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, sodium, and added sugars. Avoid foods like egg yolks, fatty meats, butter, and cream as they are high in fat and cholesterol. Bake or roast rather than frying. Read nutrition labels on packaged meals, many are high in sodium. Eat more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, dried peas, beans, pasta, fish, poultry and lean meats.
3. **Get physically active** – Check with your primary care physician before starting or increasing activity. Start slowly and build up to 2 ½ hours of moderate physical activity (such as brisk walking) a week. Take the stairs instead of the elevator, park further in the parking lot from your destination.
4. **Lose excessive weight** – Maintain a healthy weight
5. **Lower Cholesterol** – If taking medication, continue to take as directed by your primary care physician. Avoid foods like egg yolks, fatty meats, butter and cream.
6. **Reduce Blood Sugar** – If you have diabetes, follow a strict diet, monitor your blood sugar, and take your medication on time as directed.
7. **Do Not Smoke** – Make a decision to quit and stick to it. Talk to your primary care physician about ways you can quit.

Call 9-1-1 Immediately if Stroke symptoms are present:

- * Sudden weakness or numbness of the face, arm, or leg, especially on one side of the body
- * Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
- * Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- * Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- * Sudden, severe headache with no known cause

REMEMBER: ACT F.A.S.T.

F = FACE Drooping: Ask the person to smile. Does one side of the face droop or is it numb?

A = ARM Weakness: Is one arm weak or numb? Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?

S = SPEECH Difficulty: Is their speech slurred, are they unable to speak, or are they hard to understand? Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence, like "The sky is blue."

T = TIME to call 911: If the person shows any of these symptoms, even if the symptoms go away, call 911 to get them to the hospital immediately. Note the time of symptom onset

If you have any questions please call
Shore Medical Center's Neuroscience Team
(609) 653 – 3428 or (609) 653-4631